

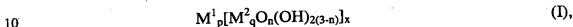
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"as enclosed to IPER"

We claim:

- 5 1. A process for preparing a polyetherol which comprises reacting at least one alkylene oxide with at least one starter compound in the presence of a catalyst, wherein the catalyst used is a multimetal oxide compound of the formula I:



where

- 15 -  $M^1$  is at least one metal of groups IA, IIA, IIIA, IVA, VA, IB, IIB, IIIB, IVB, VB, VIB, VIIB and/or VIIIB of the Periodic Table of the Elements,
- $M^2$  is at least one element of groups IVA, VA and/or VIA of the Periodic Table of the Elements,
- 20 - n is an integer or fraction from greater than 2 to 3,
- p is 1,
- 25 - q is a fraction or integer greater than 0 and
- x is a fraction or integer from 1 to 20, wherein the multimetal oxide compound of the formula I has a specific BET surface area of from 15 to 500 m<sup>2</sup>/g.
- 30 2. A process as claimed in claim 1, wherein the catalyst used is a multimetal oxide compound of the formula I which has at least one of the following properties:

- 35 (2') q is 1;
- (3') x is an integer or fraction from 1.8 to 3.2;

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- (4') the metal  $M^2$  is antimony;
- (5') the metal  $M^1$  is selected from the group consisting of zinc and aluminum.

- 5 3. A process as claimed in claim 1 or 2, wherein the metal  $M^1$  is zinc or aluminum.
4. A process as claimed in any of claims 1 to 3, wherein the multimetal oxide compound of the formula I has a crystal structure which is isotypic with  
10 the structure of the mineral partzite.
5. A process for preparing a polyetherol as claimed in any of claims 1 to 4, wherein the corresponding multimetal oxide compound is prepared using  $Sb_2O_3$  or  $Sb_2O_4$ .
- 15 6. A process for preparing a polyetherol as claimed in any of claims 1 to 5, wherein the starter compound is an OH-monofunctional or OH-polyfunctional compound.
- 20 7. The use of a multimetal oxide compound of the formula I as defined in any of claims 1 to 5 as catalyst for preparing a polyetherol from at least one alkylene oxide and at least one starter compound.
8. A polyetherol obtainable by a process as defined in any of claims 1 to 6.
- 25 9. The use of a polyetherol according to claim 8 for the synthesis of polyurethanes, as fuel additive or as surfactant.